

March 2012

## Senior Health and Wellness Newsletter

Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living

### March is National Nutrition Month

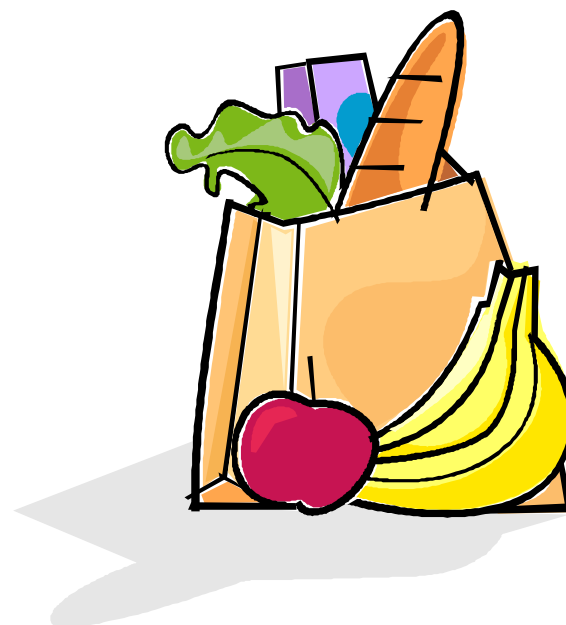
To celebrate National Nutrition Month, let's discuss what it means to eat healthy. Below you will find tips to put you on the right path.

1. **Choose good carbohydrates.** This includes fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. These foods contain good types of carbohydrates including fiber.

2. **Eat lean protein everyday.** This includes fish, poultry, nuts, beans, and lean cuts of meats. These foods contain good quality protein with less fat and calories.

3. **Limit saturated fat and avoid trans fats.** Saturated and trans fats are a few of the culprits behind heart disease and high cholesterol levels. Choosing other types of fats are healthier. These include unsaturated fats, omega three, and omega six. Reading the nutrition facts label will help you choose healthier fat sources.

4. **Low fat dairy is best.** Choosing one percent or skim milk, low fat cheeses, fat free sour cream, cottage cheese, and low fat yogurt will help limit fat and calories while still allowing you to get the calcium and vitamins



you need.

5. **Drink water instead of sugary beverages.** This will help limit calories and dental problems.

6. **Choose foods low in sodium.** Low sodium diets can help control blood pressure.

7. **Take a multivitamin.** One multivitamin per day will help you get all the nutrients you need.

For more information:

Choose MyPlate—

[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

## Too Much Sodium is Bad for You

We all need to pay attention to the amount of sodium in our foods. High sodium consumption raises blood pressure, which puts us at risk for heart disease and stroke. Your risk of having high blood pressure increases with age. Fifty percent of people aged 55–74 and seventy-five percent of those aged 75 and older have high blood pressure.

We only need a small amount of sodium to keep our bodies working properly. For most Americans, the recommended limit is 1,500 mg of sodium per day. Most Americans get a lot more sodium than that. The average daily sodium intake for Americans is more than 3,400 milligrams. Most of the sodium in our diets comes from processed and restaurant foods.

What should we do to limit the sodium in our diets?

- Choose fresh, frozen (no sauce) or no salt added foods including fruits, vegetables, and meats.
- Limit sauces, mixes, and “instant” products, including flavored rice and pasta.
- Avoid adding salt when cooking and at the table. Try using herbs and spices instead.
- Read the nutrition facts information on the package of the foods we buy. Compare products to find lower sodium options.

For more information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - <http://www.cdc.gov/salt/>

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### **Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services Department for Aging and Independent Living**

275 East Main Street 3E-E  
Frankfort Kentucky 40621  
Phone: 502-564-6930

<http://chfs.ky.gov/dail/default.htm>